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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 EB-07 AID-05 OMB-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 EUR-12

/088 W
---------- 128717
R 191655Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8818
INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLA PEKING
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 1923

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT BC
SUBJECT: GOB OFFICIAL ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CHINESE AND
ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET EMBASSY

1. SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO MINISTRY OF FINANCE PERMANENT SECRETARY. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CHINESE WERE UNDERTAKEN TO PREVENT DEVELOP-MENT OF CHINESE TIES WITH POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN BOTSWANA. ESTABLISH-
MENT OF TIES WITH CHINA OPENED UP PANDORA'S BOX WHICH MEAT A GOBORONE EMBASSY FOR THE SOVIETS AND THE PROSPECT OF WESTERN-US INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITES. END OF SUMMARY.

2. AT OCTOBER 16 SUPPER, FINANCE MINISTRY PERMANENT SECRETARY FESTUS MOGAE WOLD EMBOFF THAT MAIN RESON FOR EFTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PRC IN 1975 WAS TO ARREST DEVELOPMENT TIES BETWEEN CHINESE AND THE POLITICAL "OPPOSITION" IN BOTSWANA. DECISION TO RECOGIZE CHINESE AND BRING THEM INTO GABORNE WAS NOT EASY AND IT OPENED A PANDORA'S BOX, I.,E, THE SOVIETS WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE ACCORDED A DIPLOMATIC MISSION HERE. MOREVOER, WITH BOTH THE CHINESE
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AND THE SOVIETS IN TOWN, THE GOB WOULD BE FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF

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WESTERN AND AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES IN THE GABORONE EMBASSIES.

3. MOGAE NOTED THAT RECENTLY CONCLUDED AGREEMENT ON ECONOMIC AND TECHNIRAL COOPERATION WITH THE CHINESE WAS VERY GENERAL, NEVERTHELESS IT PROVIDED FOR A 15 MILLION DOLLAR INTEREST FREE LOAN TO BOTSWANA TO BE REPAID OVER 30 YEARS.

4. AS FOR THE SOVIETS, MOGAE SAID GOVE HAD BEEN RATHER HARD ON THEM. THE SOVIETS HAD UNSUCCESSFULLY REQUESTED PERMISSION TO
SEND A RESIDENT AMBASSADOR EVERY YEAR SINCE BOTSWANA'S INDEPENDENCE IN 1966. THE AFFIRMATIVE GOB DECISION, HOWEVER, CAME ONLY IN APRIL 1975 WHEN THE CHINESE OPENED THEIR OWN EMBASSY. NEVERTHELESS, THE SOVIETS WERE MADE TO WAIT 18 MONTHS, PRIMARILY
- -, 3/043 89, 9* &9? $8)8(3 *94 9;835 49)3 8, -,&9)-. MOGAE
SAID THAT A RESIDENT SOVEIT AMBASSADOR WOULD EFINITELY ARRIVE TO TAKE OVER THE MISSION WHICH OPENED AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

5. MOGAE ALSO DESCRIBED CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR (BASED IN LUSAKU) AND GOB VICE PRESIDENT MASIRE OVER ATTENDANCE OF BOTSWANA STUDENTS AT PATRICE LUMUMBA UNIVERSITY, WHICH MASIRE CONSIDERS TO RESEMBLE A SOUTH AFRICAN BANTUETAN INSTITUTION. IN

THIS CONNECTION, MOGAE ADDED THAT THE "OPPOSITION" HAD SPONSORED THE STUDY OF 20 BATSWANA IN THE SOVIET UNION.

6. COMMENT: IN PARTIAL CONTRAST WITH MOGAE'S VERSION OF DELAY IN ESTABLISMENT OF SOVIET EMBASSY HERE, EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS FROM EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SOURCES THAT IT WAS THE SOVIETS THEMSELVES WHO WERE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DELAY, AT LEAST IN 1976. GOB PROTOCOL OFFICE TOLD EMBOFF IN SEPTEMBER THAT GOB HAD BEEN EXPECTING SOVIET EMBASSY OPENING SINCE EARLY 1976 AND WAS QUITE PICQUED WHEN SOVIETS CHOSE TO OPEN DURING HECTIC TIME OF PREPARATION FOR THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT IN ADDITION TO THE CHARGE'D' AFFAIRES SOME 14 MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET "TRADE MISSION" HAVE RECENTLY ARRIVED IN GABORONE. RUMOR IS THAT THE "TRADE MISSION" WILL REMAIN AND JOIN SOVIET EMBASSY STAFF. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO CHECK OUT THIS REPORT. FURTHER DETAILS OF CONVERSATION WITH MOGAE FOLLOW IN MEMCON POUCHED TO
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ADDRESSEES.
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